What is claimed is:

SUB AI?

1. A computer implemented method of capturing and recording changes to an electronic and/or physical footprint of a data warehouse, comprising:

soliciting a user for data discovery information defining data and sources
5 of the data for a data warehouse;

documenting at least a portion of the footprint of the data warehouse in an SOR document using database the discovery information collected from the user as a result of said soliciting step; and

generating a user customized document incorporating at least a portion of
10 the discovery information recorded in the SOR database.

2. The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of

presenting a predefined sequence of queries for the discovery information to the user based on a set of predefined templates stored in the SOR database; and

associating user provided answers to the queries with respective ones of
5 the templates.

3. The method of claim 2, further comprising the steps of

generating an exception when the user answers a query out-of-sequence with the predefined sequence of queries and thereby creates at least one unanswered query; and

5 storing the exception in an exception table and associating the exception with the at least one unanswered query.

4.   The method of claim 3, further comprising the step of presenting a list of exceptions and associated unanswered queries to the user, to thereby inform the user of the need to collect further discovery information and record the further discovery information in the SOR database.

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5.   The method of claim 1, wherein said step of generating a customized document includes the further steps of

extracting a selected portion of the SOR database from the SOR database and storing the extracted portion in a computer memory workspace;

5   visualizing the extracted portion residing in the workspace on a computer display; and

customizing an order of presentation and an output format of the visualized, extracted portion residing in the workspace.

6.   The method of claim 5, wherein the SOR database includes templates wherein said generating step includes the further steps of:

presenting a list of the SOR templates to the user;

selecting one or more of the SOR templates from the list of SOR
5   templates; and

extracting the selected templates and associated discovery information from the SOR database to establish the extracted portion of the SOR database in the workspace.

7.   The method of claim 6, wherein the SOR database includes predefined output formats associated with generating the customized document, and wherein said generating step includes the further step of formatting the extracted portion in accordance with the output formats.

8.   The method of claim 7, further comprising the steps of

presenting a list of the output formats to the user;

selecting one or more of the output formats from the list of output formats;

and

5   associating the selected output formats with a portion of the extracted

portion of the SOR database in the workspace.

9.   The method of claim 8, wherein said associating step includes the

step of selecting a visualized portion of the extracted portion of the SOR database,

the selected, visualized portion being associated with one of the selected output

formats.

10.   The method of claim 5, wherein said customizing step includes the

step of rearranging the order of visualized portions of the extracted portion of the

SOR database residing in the workspace.

11.   The method of claim 1, wherein the discovery information

included in the SOR document includes at least one of:

names of source databases and source files providing a source of data to

the data warehouse;

5   descriptions of the source databases and files;

logical data models for the source databases and files and for the data

residing in the databases and files;

locations of the source databases and files including an identifier of the

type of device wherein the source database and files reside and geographical

10   locations of the devices;

names and contact information relating to administrators of the source

databases and files;

updating frequency of the source databases and files;

data transferring methods and frequencies for the source databases and

15   files;

volatility rules for the data in the source databases and files; and

business rationales for using the data from the source databases and files

in the data warehouse.

12.   The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of

importing discovery information, in the form of at least one of data files

and multimedia data, from sources external to the computer into a memory of the

computer; and

5   linking the imported discovery information to related discovery

information in the SOR database, whereby the imported discovery information is

accessible to the user with the related discovery information;

13.   The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of recording

configuration control information in the SOR database each time the SOR

database is updated with discovery information.

14.   The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of uploading

the SOR database to a database residing in a network accessible computer.

SUB A3?   15.   A method of claim 1, wherein the SOR database includes an SOR

document defines the starting system parameters of the data warehouse.

16.   The method of claim 15, wherein the starting system parameters

include a logical data model, a physical data model, Metadata and system

configuration templates.

SUB A47   17.   The method of claim 1, comprising updating the SOR database including modifications to the data warehouse.

18.   The method of claim 1, comprising synchronizing the SOR document with a centralized SOR database.

19.   The method of claim 1, comprising inputting data discovery information either manually or automatically.

20.   The method of claim 19, wherein the discovery information includes at least one of text, audio, images and video.

21.   The method of claim 1, wherein the customized document includes at least one of text, audio, images and video.